



City of Santa Barbara
Building & Safety Division
Undergrounding of Utilities Requirements

Community Development
630 Garden Street
805-564-5485

All utilities relating to construction of a "New Structure" and all existing utilities (other than distribution facilities) to other structures on the same parcel as a "New Structure" shall be required to be installed and/or relocated underground. A "New Structure" shall include the following:

1. All new and free-standing structures with utility service.
 2. All existing structures which have more than 500 SF of addition(s) within a 24 month period.
 3. Improvements to an existing structure within a 24 month period that total more than 50% of the current replacement value of the structure.
 4. All existing structures that will be relocated to a different parcel or relocated on the same parcel.
- When the cost of placing existing utility services underground is either so exorbitant or disproportionate to the total cost of construction so as to constitute an unreasonable hardship and the parcel is not located within an Underground District, relief from the undergrounding requirements may be granted by the Chief Building Official based upon one or more of the following requirements:
- ✓ No new utility poles shall be erected to run above-ground utilities if relief were to be granted.
 - ✓ There are other overhead utility lines in the immediate vicinity which would remain even if no waiver were granted.
 - ✓ The costs of undergrounding exceeds 10 % of the project valuation if the project is a subdivision, or 5% of the project valuation for a project other than a subdivision, as determined by the currently adopted valuation tables of the Building and Safety Division, or through use of an estimate provided by the architect, engineer or contractor for the project, whichever is higher.

"Relief From Undergrounding" Submittal Requirements and Procedure:

- Application shall be made in writing to the Chief Building Official.
- The application shall include the following:
 - ✓ Letter to the Chief Building Official requesting relief from the undergrounding requirements.
 - ✓ Detailed descriptions of the following: a) Project under review, b) Existing overhead utility service(s), c) Method of undergrounding of utilities if relief is not granted.
 - ✓ Itemized cost estimates for the following: a) Construction of the project. b) Installation of underground utilities. c) Installation of overhead utilities.
- Within twenty days of application the Chief Building Official shall hold a hearing and make a determination.
- If relief is denied the method and materials of undergrounding shall be added to the plans and become part of the project.
- If relief is granted the following steps shall be taken:
 - ✓ The owner shall pay a 5 or 10% In Lieu Fee to the cashier at the Community Development depending on the following criteria:

A **10% In Lieu Fee** shall be paid if the project is a sub-division: a) to create more than 2 lots; or b) to create a number of lots that will allow or to exist more than 2 dwelling units; or c) that is not zoned for residential use only. (Res. only zones are A-1, A-2, E-1, E-2, E-3, R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4). Fees for this type project shall be paid prior to approval of the Final Map or Parcel Map.

Or,

the owner shall pay a **5% In Lieu Fee** for all projects that do not fit into the above category. Fees for this type project shall be paid prior to building permit issuance.
 - ✓ The owner must complete and have recorded the Unilateral Underground Utility Waiver Agreement.

This document shall be provided by the Building & Safety Division and will waive the owner's right to protest formation of districts for undergrounding of utilities. The recorded waiver is to be submitted to the cashier at the Community Development Department.

- ✓ All electric service enclosures shall be suitable for both overhead and underground utilities.
- ✓ Install stubouts for all New Structures from below grade and cap off below new service enclosures for future undergrounding.